

Faculty Artist Series

Presents

The Caliban Quartet

Blues, Crystals, Tangos
and Odes

Nadina Jackson, Fraser Jackson,
Kathleen McLean, Michael Sweeney,
bassoons

Friday, February 7, 1997

8 PM

Walter Hall

Edward Johnson Building

PROGRAM

Agnus Dei

from Missa Pange Lingua

Josquin Desprez

arr. Fraser Jackson

Veni sponso Christi

Palestrina

arr. Fraser Jackson

Madrigal (1976) *

Mitchell Clarke

Caliban

from after reading Shakespeare: suite for solo cello (1981)

Ned Rorem

Nadina Mackie Jackson, *bassoon*

Crystal Blue Persuasion (1996)

Chan Ka Nin

INTERMISSION

Odes to America (1977) *

Marjan Mozetich

Good Times

Blue Souls

To Thee I Dance

Youkali (1934)

Kurt Weill

"The Isle is Full of Noises" (1995)

Carlos Rodriguez

* World premiere

The Caliban Quartet gratefully acknowledges the support of the Ontario Arts Council, and the Toronto Arts Council in commissioning the works of Marjan Mozetich and Chan Ka Nin, respectively.

The Artists

The Caliban Quartet is an occasionally monstrous and often enchanting bassoon quartet dedicated to original and plundered art music for bassoons. At home in a number of different styles, **The Caliban Quartet** regularly commissions new music and raids libraries and repertoire of other ensembles to create their own eclectic mix of the finest chamber music available. Formed in 1993, the quartet takes its name from Shakespeare's character from *The Tempest*, an odd, somewhat magical creature who shares the bassoon's fate as something unusual, earthy, undervalued, yearning and at times, humorous.

The Quartet's members all teach bassoon at the University of Toronto and three quarters of them belong to the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. In less serious moments, they have been known to appear as *The Bassoonatics* whose performances have included a wildly successful broadcast on CBC-FM with jazz pianist and bassoonist Bill Douglas, children's concerts with their own Darwood the Dragon, and a cameo appearance at the Upper Canada Brewery. The Caliban Quartet has been awarded grants by the Toronto Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Canada Council to commission works by some of today's leading new music composers including Marjan Mozetich, Chan Ka Nin, Walter Buczynski, Lois Vierk, and Jan Jarvlepp. CBC Records recently recorded a CD of the Quartet which is scheduled for release this May.

Fraser Jackson joined the Toronto Symphony as Contrabassoonist in 1990. Previously, he was the Second Bassoon in the Thunder Bay Symphony and l'Orchestre symphonique de Québec. A native of Ottawa, he obtained his music degrees from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and the University of Southern California in Los Angeles where he was one of the last students to graduate from the studio of Norman Herzberg. He has performed with such groups as New Music Concerts, ChamberWorks, Amici, and the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, and teaches in the summer with his wife Nadina at the Festival of Domaine Forget in Quebec and during the year at the University of Toronto and the Royal Conservatory of Music.

Nadina Mackie Jackson is an active chamber musician and a teacher of bassoon at the University of Toronto. Previously she was, for eleven years, the Second Bassoonist in the Montreal Symphony Orchestra. She has also held the post of Principal Bassoonist with the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra, and has performed as a chamber musician with such groups as the Scotia Festival, Music Toronto, ChamberWorks, Les Chambristes, and the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival. A native of British Columbia, she studied with Sol Schoenbach and Bernard Garfield at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia and has taught on the faculties at McGill University and the Festival of Domaine Forget. As a performer on baroque and classical bassoons, she has performed with Aradia, Cleveland's Apollo's Fire, the Handel & Haydn Society of Boston and will perform with Tafelmusik this March.

Kathleen McLean, a native of Saskatoon, is currently the Associate Principal Bassoonist of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. She has formerly been a member of the Victoria Symphony, the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra, and was Acting Principal Bassoonist in the TSO for the 1988-89 season. A busy chamber and studio musician, she is a frequent guest artist at the Vancouver Chamber Music Festival and has performed with such groups as New Music Concerts, Music Toronto, and the Amici ensemble. She also appeared at the 1990 Scotia Festival where she performed under the baton of the distinguished composer/conductor Pierre Boulez. She was a student of Sol Schoenbach at the Curtis Institute of Music and teaches at the University of Toronto.

Michael Sweeney was named Principal Bassoonist of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in 1989 after having played two seasons with the South Dakota Symphony. Originally from Southern California, he received a Master of Music degree from the State University of New York at Stony Brook as a student of Arthur Weisberg. As a chamber musician, he has been heard on the TSO's Evening Overtures series and as a regular guest of the Amici ensemble. In 1992 he performed the Bassoon Sonata of Glenn Gould at the international conference marking the 60th anniversary of Gould's birth and in 1996 he performed the Weber Concerto with the TSO under conductor Pinchas Zukerman. Mr. Sweeney teaches at Faculty of Music of the University of Toronto.

The Music

Josquin Desprez (c.1440-1521) was the most important European composer of his day. Of Northern French or Flemish descent, he was a chorister at the Milan Cathedral for much of his early career, moving on to become a court composer to the wealthy Sforza family. His mass "Pange Lingua" was written sometime after 1514 though it was not printed until 1539. The final Agnus Dei from the mass features his characteristic blending of fantasy and intellectual control. In this piece an Easter hymn melody is integrated into the counterpoint rather than used as a cantus firmus.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c.1525-1594) was also famous in his day as a master of polyphonic writing. Often referred to simply as "Gianetto", he was a prolific composer of masses and motets for Roman churches. His 1563 book of four-voice motets was a bestseller at the time, going through eleven reprints by 1622. The motet was a contrapuntal, sacred work for unaccompanied voices and the motet *Veni sponsa Christi*, chosen from this famous collection of 1563, is a fine example of Palestrina's motet style. It stresses imitation among the voices, all the time maintaining a full, consonant harmony. The text of this motet celebrates a nun's union with Christ: "Come, bride of Christ, accept the Saviour's crown which is yours for eternity."

Time magazine has called **Ned Rorem** (b.1923) "the world's best composer of art songs" yet besides his hundreds of songs, he has written three symphonies, six operas, and numerous works of other genres, as well as thirteen books. Born in Indiana, he studied at the Curtis Institute before spending nine years in Paris from 1949 to 1958. Always a great admirer of the French style, especially Ravel and Debussy, his music has always reflected a love of colour and expression. Rorem has said "Why do I write music? Because I want to hear it-- it's as simple as that. Others may have more talent, more sense of duty. But I compose just from necessity, and no one else is making what I need."

In 1981 he composed a set of pieces for solo cello inspired by passages from Shakespeare. Each movement appears with the lines that inspired it. The nine movements are entitled: *Lear*, *Katharine*, *Titania and Oberon*, *Caliban*, *Portia*, *Why hear'st thou music sadly?*, *Our minutes hasten to their end*, *Remembrance of things past*, and *Iago & Othello*.

Chan Ka Nin was born in Hong Kong in 1949 and moved with his family to Vancouver in 1965. At the University of British Columbia he studied composition with Jean Coulthard while pursuing a Bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. After graduation he continued his composition studies with Bernard Heiden at Indiana University where he obtained his Master's and Doctoral degrees in music.

His music has been performed and commissioned by many prominent ensembles in Canada including the NAC Orchestra, the Calgary Philharmonic, Orchestra London, the Purcell Quartet, and New Music Concerts. His awards include prizes in the Béla Bartók International Competition and the International Horn Society Composition Contest. He was the recipient of the 1993 Juno Award for Best Classical Composition. His trio for clarinet, cello and piano *Among Friends*, a CBC commission for Amici, won the Barlow International Competition in 1991 and has since been recorded by Amici on CD. Amici's recording of their second CBC-commissioned work by the composer "*I Think That I Shall Never See...*" won the 1996 Chalmers Award.

Since 1982, Chan Ka Nin has been teaching theory and composition at the University of Toronto. This season he is also composer-in-residence for the Scarborough Philharmonic which will perform his work *Ecstasy* on the 15th of this month. This month also sees the premiere, in Kingston, of his viola concerto written for Rivka Golani.

Crystal Blue Persuasion was commissioned by the Caliban Quartet with a grant from the Toronto Arts Council. Chan Ka Nin writes: "when composing this piece, my first thought was the intriguing sound of four bassoons. Then came a musical idea of a rising line that spans from the bottom to the top range of the bassoon, encompassing almost three octaves. The persuasive quality of this melody suggests the title *Crystal Blue Persuasion* which has a nostalgic connection to a pop song of the seventies although the music is not related. The word crystal, characterized by pure substance, seems apt to characterize the sound of this homogeneous group of instruments. Blue is the general mood of the first half; the work progresses with more enthusiasm and energy towards the end. Persuasion, as a social skill, is paralleled musically in this one movement work."

Marjan Mozetich (b.1947) has risen steadily to prominence in the Canadian musical world. In the early 1970's he graduated in composition and piano from the University of Toronto and, with the assistance of the Canada Council, he furthered his studies in Europe. Early in his career he co-founded and was artistic director of the contemporary ensemble ARRAYMUSIC. His works were performed by prominent new music groups across Canada and abroad and his several awards included second prize in the prestigious Gaudeamus Competition in Holland and first prize in the CAPAC (SOCAN) Sir Ernest MacMillan Competition.

In the 1980's he began to develop his unique style of post-modern romantic music: a blend of the traditional, popular and the modern which has been enthusiastically received by the musical public. Many of his compositions have been recorded on the CBC-Musica Viva, Centredisc, BIS (Sweden) and CANSONA labels. His works have been performed, broadcast, used in films and by renowned dance companies throughout Canada and abroad, even on Canadian Airlines' "in-flight" music program. Mr. Mozetich has written compulsory test pieces for the 1992 Banff International String Quartet Competition and the 1995 Montreal International Violin Competition. In 1995 he was the guest composer on post-modern music at the Ghent Conservatory Music Festival in Belgium where three nationally broadcast concerts featured his compositions.

Since 1990, Mr. Mozetich has been residing on Howe Island in the Thousand Islands and is on the composition staff at Queen's University. Currently he is working on several commissions including a violin concerto for Juliet Kang and the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, and a piano concerto for Janina Fialkowska.

Odes to America was commissioned by the Caliban Quartet through the assistance of the Ontario Arts Council. Marjan Mozetich writes that "these three short Odes are tributes to our close neighbour with whom I have always had a love-hate relationship. The works are built on elements of American pop idioms through which, as a true Canadian, I praise with a touch of irony."

Kurt Weill (1900-1950) began his composing career in Germany, later emigrating to the U.S.A. He became convinced that the European tradition of art music had reached its historically appointed end and was, in his day, so isolated from the realities and needs of society that it was doomed to extinction. As a result, his music tended to arrive in the form of popular stage presentations often on socially significant themes. His greatest hit, *The Threepenny Opera*, was less well received in America where what he saw as popular styles were perceived as foreign. Despite this, he wrote many successful Broadway shows after arriving in New York.

Youkali began life as an instrumental number played by a dance hall orchestra in Panama. It was part of one of his lesser-known musicals, *Marie Galante*, written in 1934. Marie is a pure-hearted French prostitute who is abducted by the callous sea captain Letuvier. She makes her way to Panama where she is forced to ply her trade to earn her fare back to France, all the while tending to a dying black man named Josiah. After finally saving enough to return, she is murdered on the eve of her departure. While in Panama, the local band plays a tango. This piece was published by Heugel of Paris in 1946 with words added by Roger Fernay. It is this version which has been adapted for bassoon quartet. The same piece was arranged for voice and ensemble by Luciano Berio in the 1970's and is included on the well-known Weill recordings by Teresa Stratas and Ute Lemper.

Carlos Rodriguez (b.1961) is one of the bright lights on the Los Angeles new music scene. Trained at UCLA, he is now the founding member and Chairman of the LoCal Composers ensemble. Currently working on commissions from The Debussy Trio and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, he has, in the past, supported himself by composing music for TV and film projects including *Batman*, the animated series. First-prize winner at the Atwater Kent Competition, he has also received awards from the National Association of Composers (USA) and ASCAP. His music has been performed at numerous venues in Los Angeles, as well as at the Studio of Electronic Music in Hartford, Connecticut, and at Mobius in Boston. Fraser Jackson has performed his *Phantsie* (1988) for amplified/processed bassoon at the Music Gallery in Toronto and on the French service of Radio-Canada. His *Pasacalle* was premiered in May of 1993, by the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Esa-Pekka Salonen.

Besides "*The Isle is Full of Noises*" and *Phantsie*, Carlos has written a number of works for solo amplified/processed instruments including his *Crater Lizards* (1986) for cello, *Five Movements* (1987) for flute, and *Crazed Corollaries* (1994) for clarinet. Tonight's piece, commissioned by Nadina Mackie Jackson, is his first and only experiment with a processed chamber group. We are indebted to Joel Kavakov at Yamaha Corporation of America for his assistance in making the electronics affordable. The general idea is that the signals picked up by microphones attached to each bassoon are then processed in ways determined by the composer. Each processor accepts two signals via its right and left stereo channels and two of the players use footswitches to move stepwise through the series of preset effects. The title is inspired by the reassurances Caliban gives his new master Stephano in Act 3, Scene 2 of *The Tempest*:

"Be not afraid. The isle is full of noises, Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not. Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments Will hum about mine ears, and sometimes voices That if I then had waked after long sleep Will make me sleep again; and then in dreaming The clouds methought would open and show riches Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked I cried to dream again."

The première of "*The Isle is Full of Noises*" was given by the Caliban Quartet on November 5, 1995 at the Music Gallery in Toronto. This is its second performance.

Born in Toronto, **Mitchell Clarke** studied bassoon with Wayland Mosher and Nicholas Kilburn. After earning a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Toronto he worked with the late arranger and composer, Ben McPeck and studied with Gordon Delamont. His arrangements have been played extensively by the Toronto Symphony since he joined the orchestra as a bassoonist in 1973. He has published choral arrangements and woodwind and brass quintets. The Toronto Chamber Winds played many of his arrangements for double reed ensemble and wind octet. He currently performs with the Symphony Winds, who recently premiered his transcription for wind octet, of Mozart's Adagio and Fugue in C minor, at the Glenn Gould Studio. The **Caliban Quartet** recently recorded his *Madrigal* for their CBC compact disc.

Madrigal has only one theme, that former theory teacher Gerhard Wuensch might have described as "a melody of truly bovine simplicity." The harmonic usage is very traditional, but the rhythmic impetus is 5/8 without any regular 3+2 or 2+3 subgroupings. This should be disorienting enough for anyone who needs the confusion. The title comes from the *fa-la-la-la-la* style of some figurations later in the piece, rather than any strict relation to madrigal style or form.

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Now for a limited time the province will match each dollar donated to a university's student aid endowment. Interest from the endowment will provide student aid in the years to come. But the government's program is only in effect until March 31, 1997. The time to act is now.

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8:00 pm

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Hatzis: Pavillons En l'Air; Nunavut; Equivoque

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Saturday, February 8

8:00 pm

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Bernstein: Mass (Choral Excerpts)

Schubert: Mass in G

Telfer: Missa Brevis

Raminsh: Alleluia, Amen

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